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ABSTRACT

This article examines the Snow Hill Institute, one of several 19th-century industrial schools founded for rural Southern black students, following the model of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute. This case study provides a sketch of William J. Edwards, an early Tuskegee alumnus and founder of the Snow Hill Institute in Wilcox County, Alabama. The document examines Edwards' life, the circumstances surrounding the 1894 establishment of the school, and the political and racial contexts of the time. Edwards worked under discouraging conditions, including contemporary racial stress, the deficient education of the black community, church opposition, and lack of resources. In some areas, Snow Hill's development contrasts with that of Tuskegee, as illustrated by correspondence between Washington and Edwards. Snow Hill's early nature and course content were separatist and agrarian. The heart of the institute was its emphasis on agricultural and manual training. Each course had a definable community and vocational component. By necessity, Edwards became a racial tactician, plotting strategies to survive the racially divided environment. The article concludes that the history and origin of Edwards' school demonstrates that political, economic, and cultural conditions of the time directly influenced educational policy development. The paper includes more than 50 notes that provide historical material on the subject. (TES)

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Race, Ruralism, and Reformation: William J. Edwards And Snow Hill Institute, 1894-1915

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When Monroe N. Work, Director or Research and Records at Tuskegee Institute, publicized the achievements of graduates in 1911, he noted with pride that twenty-three industrial schools had been "directly or indirectly founded by graduates and former students." These "offshoots" were located in eight southern states and represented a significant extension of the "Spirit of Tuskegee."[1] Educational historians have not studied in depth the replicas of Tuskegee, focusing instead on Booker T. Washington's school or on his alma mater, Hampton Institute. Historian Raymond Gavins has commented on this tendency to single out "men and women of undisputed national reputation, a few black heroes and heroines esteemed the most outstanding representatives of their race...[while] lesser known members of the black vanguard remain undeservedly obscure." Gavins calls for studies of "significant minor figures" to provide "new data for the portfolio on how black leaders function."[2]

Whatever became of the "little Tuskegees"? Careful inquiry into the policies and practices of one black southern educator between 1894 and 1915, the year that Washington died, will provide additional data on black educational leadership during the years of Washington's ascendancy. This article seeks to reclaim from the shadow of the Tuskegee principal an educator who provided indigenous stewardship for black students in the rural South a generation after emancipation. As a member of a significant educational phalanx, William J. Edwards established objectives

for, and gave direction to, the development of both his students and his communities.

Several major questions need to be addressed in this attempt to shed some light on a Tuskegee replica: What procedures did Edwards have to follow in order to establish his schools? Who opposed him? On whom could he rely? What were the societal constraints? What kind of relationship did each school form with its community? And finally, what light does this research shed on the triumphs and travails of African-American educational leadership?

Historian Elizabeth Jacoway has argued that historians have distorted the study of black industrial education because they have tended "to concentrate on the outcome of the industrial education movement - analyzing the product rather than the process - and often they have read history backwards from the outcome to the intent." Jacoway suggests that a "complete understanding of the industrial education movement must rest first of all on a correct identification and assessment of the assumptions underlying the experience."[3] A basic premise of this study is that by focusing on the evolution of policy and practice, the historian will achieve a balanced view of Snow Hill Institute and its founder.

A portfolio on black educators must also recognize the historical limitations imposed on their leadership. Each educator needs to be etched against his time and place. Agendas and strategies could not be exclusively educational. Political,

economic, and racial constraints were always present, constituting a "web of subordination" imposed by whites to dominate and emasculate black educational advancement.[4] A recognition of these constraints and an analysis of the tactics employed to circumvent them are prerequisites for a judicious interpretation of the black educational leader in this study.

In an effort to present a balanced view of process and practice, a case study provides a sketch of the school founder, the compelling circumstances surrounding the establishment of the school, and information concerning the setting and the political and racial factors that existed at the time. Documentation of the development of rural extension activities and character reformation efforts is also provided.

One of the most significant members of Tuskegee Institute's educational phalanx was William J. Edwards, founder of Snow Hill Institute in Wilcox County, Alabama, in the western part of Alabama's Black Belt. Edwards has the distinction of being one of the earliest founders of a Tuskegee offshoot, having started his school in 1894, only five years after Cornelia Brown had established the first offshoot, Mt. Meigs Colored Institute at Waugh, Alabama.[5]

Edwards was born on September 12, 1869, in the Black Belt community of Snow Hill, three-quarters of a mile east of where he was to build his school twenty-five years later. He was an orphan at the age of six. The task of rearing Edwards was left to his paternal grandmother and eventually to an aunt. At the age of

twelve Edwards became ill from scofula, a bone disease that affected his legs and caused him to walk only with much difficulty and pain. He was operated on in 1884 and regained his ability to walk three years later.[6]

Edwards heard about Tuskegee Institute while attending a church revival in 1887. He rented several acres of land, raised a crop, and used the proceeds to enter the school in 1889. Four years later he graduated second in a class of twenty. His class motto was "Deeds Not Words." Booker T. Washington had a profound influence on Edwards, who remembered the Tuskegee founder's Sunday evening talks stressing the need for service to black people: "I could understand every word he said, and too, I felt always that he was talking directly to me."[7] The vision of duty to the unfortunate that Washington had placed before him decided Edwards's lifework. Snow Hill, the place of his boyhood struggles, was to be his proving ground, and graduation from Tuskegee conferred on him "almost an ordination as a minister of the Tuskegee gospel."[8]

Aspiration did not translate easily into acceptance. When Edwards returned home in the summer of 1893, he begain teaching summer school in an "old dilapidated log cabin...they were using for a school house" despite being cursed with "many oaths" by the chairman of the local white school trustees. He also used the summer months to learn the "real condition of our people" by travelling 157 miles through four neighboring counties. Edwards drew a stark portrait of blacks: he found the "religious and

moral condition of the people very low...with little regard for truth and none at all for promises.... Their homes were usually one-room log cabins, which were often kept quite dirty and filthy."[9]

His discoveries on this journey convinced Edwards to build a school and also determined its character. He moved cautiously, however. Conditions differed greatly from those surrounding the establishment of Tuskegee Institute. No political collaboration between blacks and whites existed in Wilcox County, and Edwards received no telegram inviting him to become principal, as had his mentor.[10] Instead, the recent normal school graduate felt the need to canvass contiguous counties in order to be sure of his ground. In the spring of 1894, he called several black men together ("all unlettered but one") and proposed the idea of an industrial school, "to make education practical rather than theoretical."[11]

But Edwards could not easily translate his vision into reality. He had to contend with many black parents who opposed his "industrial plank" with the objection that "the end of education was to free their children from manual labor rather than prepare them for more and better work." Teachers "here and there who had not attended any Industrial School" and "illiterate preachers...who had not had any particular training" led the opposition.[12]

As the school began, Snow Hill Institute also battled to remain free of religious ties. Edwards's own African Methodist

Episcopal Church wanted him "to teach a demoninational school." When he refused, his minister decided to establish a church school in Snow Hill and offered Edwards the principalship. Church officials threatened "to crush [him] out of existence" if he resisted. He refused to comply because, as he insisted, he was "working for the people and not a certain class."[13] In contrast to this crisis in Snow Hill, Washington initially benefited from the willingness of a local black church to provide space for his school on its property.[14] Despite his church's opposition, Edwards started his school in the fall of 1894 with three students, two 20 X 15 recitation rooms, and "without any church or society responsible for one dollar of its expenses."[15] The development of Snow Hill Institute was no easy task. In 1896, two years after he started his school, he informed Washington of the toll that building the school had taken on him:

> I am having a hard time, knowing that, I have no certain source from which to obtain means to carry on this work.... Sometimes I get weak and at such times the work suffers.... I have not had one week's rest since July 1895.... No one knows the sacrifice but God.... Sometimes I think the end is near but I go struggling on hoping for better times.[16]

The difficulties in keeping a black industrial school financially viable continually plagued Edwards: "We...watch with the greatest anxiety each passing month; and when the end is reached even with the least amount of success, it brings to us

unspeakable and inexpressible joy; which no one but him upon whom such a a burden is placed...can wholly appreciate."[17]

Financial support came principally from northern contributors. Edwards traveled with the Tuskegee Institute Quartet when it went north in the summer of 1898 to raise money. This "Northern Campaign" enabled the Snow Hill principal to meet potential donors, especially in Boston, and resulted in yearly trips thereafter. Edwards also formed the Snow Hill Singers to help raise funds.[18]

As he built his school, Edwards also had to contend with racial tensions and political and educational inequities in Alabama. Between 1893 and 1915, 120 blacks were lynched in the state, including 3 in Wilcox County and 19 in contiguous counties.[19] A school law of 1891 granted local school authorities complete control over the distribution of state funds to black and white schools. The results of this law were illustrated by public school expenditures in Wilcox County. Money spent in 1889-90 amounted to $1.02 per white student and ninety cents per black student. The per capita expense for white students reached $27.75 in 1911-12, while only fifty-four cents was spent to educate a black child. In addition, the average length of the public school term was 6.7 months for whites and only 3.9 months for blacks. These inequities took their toll. By 1910 black illiteracy in Wilcox county reached 50.4 percent, while only 4.4 percent of the white residents could not read and write.[20] Blacks lost not only educational benefits but also

their right to vote. The new Alabama Constitution of 1901 disenfranchised black people and enfeebled any political efforts to protest disparities in education.

As a black educator, Edwards noted that "in order for us to do any work at all in the South, we must have the support of the southern white man."[21] He furthered his ambitions through a personal relationship with Randall O. Simpson, a former slaveholder and a Confederate veteran, who owned most of the land around Snow Hill Institute.[22] Edwards was raised on Simpson's plantation, had received money from him when he was sick, and even borrowed money from him to purchase a suit for his Tuskegee commencement. Impressed by what he perceived education had done for Edwards, Simpson gave him seven acres of land in 1894 and encouraged Edwards to build a school that the black laborers on his plantation could attend.[23]

The realities of black educational leadership in the racially circumscribed environment of Wilcox County reinforced Edwards's reliance upon Simpson. The Confederate veteran chaired Snow Hill Institute's Board of Trustees, and his son served as both treasurer and auditor. When Edwards battled his own church for independence in 1894, Simpson's offer of land provided him with the "foundation...to go on with my work."[24] Washington extolled the Edwards-Simpson relationship: "No man could watch over a member of his own family with more solicitude and tender care than does Mr. Simpson guard this school, and between him and Edwards there is completed faith." Edwards did not disagree. He called

his main white supporter "one of the noblest men that I have ever met.... Without R. O. Simpson there could not have been any Snow Hill Institute. We might have built a similar school elsewhere, but we could not have built it at Snow Hill."[25]

Simpson's paternalism had limits, however, He sold 1,400 acres of land to Edwards for twenty-six thousand dollars in 1908, a debt that exacerbated the financial woes of snow Hill Institute. His donations was occasional. He was "not really in full agreement with the idea of negro-white equality; he fell short of committing himself to...[a] more complete negro-white equalitarianism."[26] Nor did he raise any vocal objections to the educational inequities that affected black students.

Washington encouraged Edwards to maintain friendly relationships with other local whites. In 1914 he urged his protege to make a "stronger and more systematic effort to bring the white people of Wilcox County into close contact with your work.... You are not close enough in cooperation with them and do not get hold of the white people in your county in the way that it is possible to do." Edwards admitted his estrangement from local whites. "The white people of the county, for the most," he said, were "far behind the white people in many other counties of the state [and were] indeed backward in expr[illegible]ing [support]." After twenty years as principal, Edwards forecasted that "altho it will take time, I believe there will be a more cordial cooperation between the white people of the county and the school."[27]

Edwards never permitted his close relationship with Simpson to blind him to the stark realities of his environment. He deliberately selected a school site "1 1/2 mile west of the town [of Snow Hill]...[with] not a white family...1 1/2 mile of the place," and criticized the proposed location of his church's rival school for being "in the heart of the village [of Snow Hill] and surrounded by members of the white race which prevents an outlet of any kind." The location of Snow Hill Institute became a recruiting tool, reflecting separateness as well as self-reliance. Nearly every school catalog and annual report repeatedly stated that "we are located in the center of the colored population of this state."[28]

Edwards deliberately promoted the separatist nature of his school's location in letters to potential donors, citing his "dark and benighted" campus and billing it as a "light in the Black Belt." A black visitor to Snow Hill in 1906 also commented that the "chief element of this Institution's importance is, of course, derived from its location: it is right in the midst of the real thing of the American negro race."[29] Wilcox County, indeed, had a black majority. In 1890, four years before Snow Hill Institute was established, blacks comprised 78 percent of the population. By 1910 the black population had reached 82 percent.[30]

Choosing a school site away from the eyes of white people and solemnizing his predominantly black environment were strategies consciously embraced by Edwards. Indeed, the Snow Hill educator contended that segregation enabled his people to develop

self-reliance and independence. Blacks could take advantage of the "benefits wrought by hardship" by establishing their own schools and churches in their own communities.[31]

Edwards publicly ignored southern racism while residing in the South, choosing to carry a message of dissent to northern audiences only. He criticized educational inequities on fund-raising missions and in promotional literature. For example, he told a group in Lake Placid, New York, that he was "compelled" to seek northern financial support because Southerners were not "educated sufficiently to care for their own problems." Brochures and "Dear friend" letters to northern contributors often highlighted the "plague of ignorance" descending on black people who were "wholly neglected in educational matters." Racism ravaged his people: "Hundreds are being lynched, thousands are being imprisoned, and hurried to premature graves.... Racial prejudice still blinds the Southern white...from doing the fair, [and] the necessary thing for [the] negro."[32]

Edwards was a modern realist of the first order. He knew that education for blacks in Alabama revolved around issues of race. Since he could not rely upon local white support, he sought "strong Northern men [to be] of some service...in getting up the necessary means to carry on this work."[33] He had to be a muted trumpet on race issues in the South but also sound a clarion call for industrial education.

Edwards envisioned himself as a missionary and a liberator; he intended to train a cadre of students to help rectify the moral

and social ills of his people. The ideal Snow Hill graduate would "influence the people to stop living in rented one-room log-cabins," arouse "educational interest," and promote "good character building." In Edward's view, black people were not irrevocably chained to their social status. He believed that they could become "better men and better women" and lead "pure and upright lives" because intuitively they knew that education was the "source of all we have and the spring of all our future joys."[34]

Students at Snow Hill Institute endured a strict social regimen. Rules and regulations in the school catalog included prohibitions against "profane language, use of tobacco, intoxicants, card playing and the use of fire arms." All students were expected to be "neat of work and clean of person." The school's location contributed to a proper moral environment because "NO SALOONS ARE NEAR."[35]

Religious training was not neglected. Although Edwards had battled to keep his school nondemoninational, he wanted to develop Christian character in his pupils. His school had its own chaplain, and the Bible was studied as "History, Ethics, and Religion," with prayer meetings every Friday evening. Residential students followed a rigorous routine on Sundays: "Students attended a Y.M.C.A. Meeting at 9:00 a.m., preaching services in the chapel at 11:00 a.m., and Sunday School classes immediately [afterward]." The whole school assembled in the chapel for an evening service conducted by Edwards.[36] In 1913 the school

offered a Bible course for ministers. Edwards believed that black people needed an "educated and moral ministry...properly fitted for their work," and he cynically referred to illiterate black preachers whose "texts were as often taken from Webster's blue-backed-speller as from the Bible, and sometimes this would be held upside down."[37]

In Edwards's view, the moral, educational, and social regeneration of black people could only be accomplished in the rural South. Edwards claimed that agriculture and black land-ownership comprised the "basis" of his work. He intended to "inculcate in [our] students a real love for [the] country life [by] educating the negro to be a skillful farmer and settling him upon small farms of his own." Snow Hill Institute frequently advertised that it was located in an area where "ninety-nine percent of the people...depend upon some form of agriculture for a livelihood." The message was clear: "It is our aim to make this primarily an agricultural school, and thus fit these people for their life's work."[38]

Black Belt ruralism offered Edwards's constituency the "opportunity of the age." Although many of his brethren were leaving Wilcox County, the Snow Hill principal argued that "in spite of the denial of political rights...of poor educational opportunities and many other unjust discriminations, the South...is the best place in this country for the Negro." Edwards did not want black people to go North or to move to southern cities. His commitment to agrariansim was not meant to be

self-serving. He believed that black people had a "better opportunity [to develop] a solid and enduring character" in the rural South."[39]

Like many other black educators in the "Tuskegee Circle," Edwards embraced the "doctrine of permanence," which stipulated that blacks should remain southern agrarians forever. He never departed from this belief. In the twilight of his principalship, he made the following plaint:

> Too many of our young men and women have no vision as to the future, they want to go thru school and run off to Chicago, Detroit, N.Y. and other large cities and do mere work that any ordinary man can do. We are not educating you for that, but here in the South a great work is before us, and the vast majority of our people are here.[40]

Edwards embraced community extension services as a key objective for the school. He wanted to establish "in the minds of the people of this section the fact that the South is the best place for the Negro."[41] To accomplish this goal, Edwards established three important community services: the Snow Hill Farmers' Conference, an annual gathering at which farmers could receive "new ideas, new information, and [could] take fresh courage"; the Workers' Conference for "teachers and preachers [to present] what [they] are doing, the methods they are pursuing, and the results being achieved"; and the Black Belt Improvement Society, a community organization designed to "reach the ills that most retard the negroes of the South."[42] The Society formed

various committees that met each month. For example, the education committee encouraged blacks in Wilcox County "to build better schoolhouses, to extend school terms, and to keep their children in school." The labor committee was formed "to gather together those of our race who still work as contract-hands...day-laborers, and domestics [sic] servants, and impress upon them the necessity of rendering their best service."[43] The purpose of these activities was to promote self-sufficiency and to improve living conditions.

Edwards started his school with 3 students in 1894. Four years later a school catalog listed a student body of 186. An analysis of enrollment data reveals that the average annual student count for the period 1902-15 was 319. Female students consistently outnumbered male students, but the differences were not overwhelming. Students in the Training School (the first through sixth grades) comprised 77 percent of the entire student body by 1908. A student had to be at least fourteen years old to enter the two-year teacher training program or to learn a trade. Normal school students never exceeded 23 percent of the enrollment between 1902 and 1915.

The heart of Snow Hill Institute was its emphasis on agricultural and manual training. Edwards passionately supported industrial education: "If I could, I would write, in letters of gold, the words 'Industrial Education' on every school, every church, and every home in the land." Each course had a definable community and vocational component. Cooking was introduced into

the curriculum not only to provide employment for female students but to enable "the girls here to know what is and what is not nutritious...[because] we have long since realized that many of the undergrown and weak, unhealthy people in the country, are made so by the food they eat." In Edwards's view, housekeeping would help students distinguish between "the difference in a home and a house," sawmilling would enable the surrounding black community to erect "more neat and comfortable cottages," and farming would prepare students "to go into these dark [black] places and show the people what is best to plant."[44]

Advocacy and adequacy rarely matched, however. Edwards noted in 1903 that his carpentry shop failed "to meet its needs...relative to room and productiveness" and admitted little improvement eight years later. Although he wanted all learning to "revolve around the agriculture department as a center," he acknowledged that success was elusive because of a lack of funds "to equip this department adequately." After eighteen years' work, the Snow Hill principal admitted that the "industrial work has not been so satisfactory."[45]

In his efforts to devise an educational program for blacks in the post-Reconstruction Black Belt environment, Edwards began his work under discouraging conditions. The racial stress of the time, the deficient educational background of the black people in his community, the opposition of his church, and the need to build a school from the ground up without visible means to do so, were some of the problems facing the twenty-four-year-old educator when

he graduated from Tuskegee Institute in 1893. Furthermore, Edwards inaugurated his work only after he had made an intensive survey of life in rural Alabama.

Yet even though Edwards was committed to the survival of blacks in the rural South and conceived his school as an opportunity for service, rhetoric and reality were not congruent. He celebrated agriculture, but his school's farm failed. Snow Hill had few graduates, and many of them migrated to other southern states or went north. And while he vigorously advocated industrial education, the Snow Hill principal also acknowledged the deficiencies of his own educational offerings.

Edwards built his school on hope. He wanted his institution to light fires of aspiration, not snuff them out. He sustained a strength and resilience that allowed him to confront an otherwise socially inscribed and historically constituted racial environment by embracing a separatist, self-help philosophy. He viewed industrial education as a rational choice for black educational leadership, but he did not produce as many tangible benefits as he had hoped to produce. A herald for his cause, Edwards dedicated himself "unreservedly to these people, among whom I was reared, among whom I shall continue to labor, and among whom I shall at the last be buried."[46]

The history of the origin and initial development of Edwards' school demonstrates that contemporary political, economic, and cultural conditions directly influenced the development of educational policy. The milieu of black school leadership

dictated that certain perspectives, methodologies, and associations would remain constant in the southern black experience. The choices that Edwards made and the challenges he encountered influenced the basic orientation of his institution.

In the very act of establishing his school, Edwards faced opposition from black parents who resisted industrial education as well as antagonism from his church over jurisdiction of Snow Hill Institute. Even though he started his school in his own community, he cautiously and deliberately studied his locale before beginning his work. Sustaining Snow Hill proved as formidable a task as starting it, and the obstacles were almost insuperable. Edwards was never able to develop viable manual training facilities, and few of his students actually graduated. He had to be an initiator and a reactor, an inaugurator and a respondent. He no doubt would have recognized himself in his portrayal of the black educator: "He finds no way prepared, he must make one; he finds no school-house ready, he must build one; he finds no people anxiously awaiting him, he must persuade them."[48]

The development of the policies and practices of Snow Hill Institute can also be analyzed within the context of the three Rs: race, ruralism, and reformation. Edwards by necessity became a racial tactician, forced to plot strategies and to display a repertoire of responses in order to survive his racially divided environment. He proved quite adept at confronting his hostile environs in order to assure the survival of his school. Edwards

built an alliance and close personal relationship with a white planter, but he remained estranged from the majority of whites in his community despite prodding from Tuskegee to "get hold of the white people in your county."[49] He chose, instead, to build his school a mile-and-a-half from the town of Snow Hill as a way to emphasize the separatist and self-determining nature of his endeavor. Edwards used location rather than elocution as a visible symbol of protest against racism.

The second contextual "R" for the Snow Hill principal wasruralism. Without exception, he recognized the agrarian roots of black people and celebrated the virtues of the country. Snow Hill addressed the problems of rural life through extension services like farmers' conferences designed to inform and the Black Belt Improvement Society intended to reform and revitalize community life. Homage to ruralism was matched only by the belief that the South was the best place for blacks to live. Edwards adhered to a "doctrine of permanence" and regarded the South as "the soul of black being [and] the germinative womb out of which the Negro's entire existence and cultural identity inextricably rose and evolved." He fervently opposed black migration, refusing to view the North as a "generous life-giver" or stigmatize the South as the "implacable oppressor" of black people.[50]

Snow Hill Institute was also designed to shape proper behavior. Reformation of character became as compelling a concern as racism and ruralism. Students were expected to obey rules and regulations and follow precise routines that would, according to

its principal, build disposition and remove the deficits of unstable homes. Edwards sought "lost boys [and] girls" who could become, under his care, "better men and better women."[51] An emphasis on character development was a logical and significant manifestation of these beliefs.

Conclusion

The experiences of Edwards embodied the possibly of self-improvement. He assumed a responsibility for the uplift of his students and his community. He believed that education was the pathway for black people to reach their potential and that his school could provide black students with a chance to be honest, self-respecting, and hardworking members of society. Born after the sorrow of slavery and passed on in expectation by what historian Herbert Gutman has called the "self-activities" of black people to educate themselves after emancipation, Snow Hill represented an educational initiative for problems that needed to be solved, voices that needed to be heard, and responsibilities that need to be met.[52]

An examination of selected policies and processes in use at Snow Hill from its founding until 1915 does not reveal any exploitation of the aspirations of black students. Edwards did not seek to "educate for servitude" or "school for a new slavery."[53] He was committed to black survival in the rural South and conceived his efforts as opportunities for service. The conditions under which he worked and the difficulties, disappointments, and discouragements that he encountered all

reflected the need for patience, dedication, and hard work. But African-American educational history is better understood when process and product are analyzed. In the case of Snow Hill Institute, rhetoric and reality were not often congruent. The school hovered frequently between the bright lights of triumph and the shadows of defeat. As a declaration of possibility, however, it represented the beginning of a solution rather than the end of the problem. For Edwards, the realities of black educational leadership always seemed to have been located between struggle and hope.

Footnotes

[1]Monroe N. Work, Industrial Work of Tuskegee Graduates and Former Students during the Year 1910 (Tuskegee Institute, Ala., 1911), 47. Replicas of Tuskegee were established or headed by Tuskegee graduates in Alabama, Arkansas, South Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, and Virginia.

[2]Raymond Gavins, "Gordon Blaine Hancock: A Black Profile from the New South," Journal of Negro History 59 (July 1974): 207.

[3]Elizabeth Jacobway, Yankee Missionaries in the South: The Penn School Experiment (Baton Rouge, La., 1980), 3-4, 21.

[4]Robert G. Sherer, Subordination or Liberation?: The Development and Conflicting Theories of Black Education in Nineteenth Century Alabama (University, Ala., 1977), viii.

[5]Work, Industrial Work of Tuskegee Graduates, 51.

[6]Biographical data about Edwards can be found in Clement Richardson, ed., The National Cyclopedia of the Colored Race (Montgomery, Ala., 1919), 40-41; and J. H. Moorman and E. C. Barrett, eds., Leaders of the Colored Race in Alabama (Mobile, Ala., 1928), 67. Edwards wrote an autobiography, Twenty-Five Years in the Black Belt (Boston, 1918), which is a compilation of writings published throughout his career.

[7]William J. Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," in Tuskegee and Its People: Their Ideals and Achievements, ed. Booker T. Washington (New York, 1905; reprint, New York, 1969), 225; Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 23-24.

[8]Louis R Harlan, Booker T. Washington: The Wizard of Tuskegee, 1901-1915 (New York, 1983), 170.

[9]"Review of the History of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute," The Black Belt, July 1899, Microfilm Records of The Snow Hill Institute, SNI.2, Talladega College Historical Collections, Talladega, Ala. (Hereafter cited as Snow Hill Records or SHR.) Edwards also described his trip in "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 229-40.

[10]The establishment of Tuskegee Institute occurred when black people in Macon County agreed to support a white lawyer for the state senate if he agreed, upon being elected, to work for the creation of a school for the county's black population. Once the school was funded, the board of commissioners asked Samuel Chapman Armstrong, the white founder of Hampton Institute, to suggest a candidate to head the school. Armstrong recommended Booker T. Washington, and his suggestion was accepted with a telegram that read: "Booker T. Washington will suit us. Send him at once." See Basil Mathews, Booker T. Washington: Educator and Interracial Interpreter (Cambridge, 1948), 62-63; Louis R. Harlan, Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901 (New York, 1972), 115.

[11]"Review of the History of the Snow Hill Institute"; Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 240.

[12]Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 241-42; Tenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 5 May 1904, SHR, SNI.2.

[13]William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 5 September 1894, Booker T. Washington Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as BTW Papers).

[14]Harlan, The Making of a Black Leader, 122.

[15]William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 5 September 1894, BTW Papers.

[16]William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 7 November 1896, BTW Papers.

[17]Fifth Annual Report of the Principal [of Snow Hill Institute], 10 May 1899, SHR, SNI.2. Edwards received his first major donation when Andrew Carnegie gave his school ten thousand dollars in 1906. Snow Hill Institute also received assistance from the Slater Fund, the Rosenwald Fund, and the Southern Education Fund. See Enck, "Black Self-Help."

[18]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 45-47; Henry S. Enck, "Black Self-Help in the Progressive Era: The 'Northern Campaigns' of Smaller Southern Black Industrial Schools, 1900-1915," Journal of Negro History 61 (January 1976): 73-87; The Black Belt 4 (August 1902): 2, J. G. Phelps

Stokes Papers, Box 18, "Misc. Negro Schools" folder, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library, New York.

[19]Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918 (New York, 1919), 35,47. The lynchings in Wilcox County occurred in 1904 and 1905.

[20]Glen Sisk, "The Educational Awakening in Alabama and its Effect upon the Black Belt, 1900-1917," Journal of Negro Education 25 (Spring 1956): 193; U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population (Washington, 1913), 2:59.

[21]William J. Edwards to Emmett J. Scott, 18 June 1912, BTW Papers.

[22]Simpson was born in Belleville, Alabama, in 1842. After the Civil War, he planted cotton and prospered. He died in 1926. See The Booker T. Washington Papers, 13 vols., ed. Louis R. Harlan, et al., (Urbana, Ill., 1972-84), 3:530-31.

[23]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 39-56; Washington, "Signs of Progess among the Negroes," 472-78.

[24]Booker T. Washington, "A Man About Whom the World Should Know," The Independent 58 (May 1905): 1116; William J. Edwards to Booker.T. Washington, 5 September 1894, BTW Papers. Simpson served on the Board of Trustees of Tuskegee Institute from 1896 until his death in 1926. His service on the Snow Hill Institute board started in 1898.

[25]Washington, "A Man About Whom the World Should Know," 1116; Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 56-57.

[26]Eighteenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1911-12, SHR, SNI.2; Sandra Kissick, "The Theme of Exodus Versus Permanence in the South in Negro Autobiographies Published Between 1900 and 1915" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1972), 94-95.

[27]Booker T. Washington to William J. Edwards, 30 November 1914, BTW Papers; William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 1 December 1914, BTW Papers.

[28]William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 5 September 1894, BTW Papers. Typical references to location appear in Fifth Annual Report of the Principal [of Snow Hill Institute] and Tenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of Snow Hill.

[29]William J. Edwards to "My Dear Friend," 20 July 1910, Snow Hill File, Peabody Education Fund Papers, Special Collection, the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. (hereafter referred to as PEFP); William J. Edwards, "An Appeal for the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute," 1911, Snow Hill File, PEFP; William J. Edwards, "Snow Hill Institute, a Light in the Black Belt," 1913, Snow Hill File, PEFP; William Pickens, "The Talladega Letter on Snow Hill," Alexander's Magazine 2 (May 1906): 18.

[30]In 1890, there were 24,022 blacks and 6,794 whites living in Wilcox County; see U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890: Population (Washington, 1895), 1:402. The population of Wilcox County in 1910 included 27,062 blacks and 6,208 whites. See Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population 2:34, 58.

[31]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 115-19.

[32]William J. Edwards, "Educational and Religious Needs of the Southern Negro" (Address before Lake Placid Club, New York, 1903), SHR, SNI.6; William J. Edwards to "My Dear Friend," 20 July 1910, Snow Hill File, PEFP; "Snow Hill Institute," 1910,SHR, SNI.6

[33]William J. Edwards to Booker T. Washington, 23 February 1909, BTW Papers.

[34]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 134-35, 141; Edwards, "Educational and Religious Needs."

[35]Fourteenth Annual Catalogue of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1907-8, 6, 9, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Ala. (hereafter cited as ADAH); Seventeenth Annual Catalogue of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1911-12, 6, SHR, SNI.3; Tenth Annual Catalogue of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1903-4, 13, ADAH. Capitalization in the original.

[36]Tenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of Snow Hill; Fourteenth Annual Catalogue of Snow Hill, 16;

Eighth Annual Catalogue of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1901-2, 2, ADAH; William J. Edwards, "Some Results of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1894-1910," Snow Hill File, PEFP.

[37]See Joseph Davis, "A Historical Study of Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute and its Contribution to the Educational Program of the State of Alabama" (M.Ed. thesis, Alabama State College, 1954), 23, for mention of Bible course; Edwards, "Educational and Religious Needs"; Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 233-34, 236.

[38]Tenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of Snow Hill; "An Appeal for the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, Snow Hill, Ala.," 1911, Snow Hill File, PEFP.

[39]The Black Belt 4:3; "Speech of William J. Edwards" Alexander's Magazine 2 (May 1906): 64-65; Eleventh Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute, 1905, SHR, SNI.2. The black population in Wilcox County declined from 28,652 in 1900 to 27,602 in 1910.

[40]Kissick, "The Theme of Exodus Versus Permanence," 180; William J. Edwards, "Sowing and Reaping," 23 January 1921, SHR, SNI.6.

[41]The Black Belt 4:3.

[42]Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 245-50; Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 42.

[43]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 249-50.

[44]Edwards, "The Signs of the Time"; Fifth Annual Catalogue of Snow Hill, 11; Eighth Annual Catalogue of Snow Hill, 11, 12.

[45]Tenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of Snow Hill; Seventeenth Annual Catalogue of Snow Hill, 22; Eighteenth Annual Report of the Principal and Treasurer of Snow Hill.

[46]Edwards, "Uplifting the Submerged Masses," 252.

[47]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 135.

[48]Booker T. Washington to William J. Edwards, 30 November 1914, BTW. Papers

[49]Kissick, "The Theme of Exodus Versus Permanence in the South in Negro Autobiographies Published Between 1900 and 1915", 178, 186.

[50]Edwards, Twenty-Five Years, 51.

[51]Gutman is cited in James D. Anderson, "Ex-Slaves and the Rise of Universal Education in the New South, 1860-1880," in Education and the Rise of the New South, ed. Ronald K. Goodenow and Arthur O. White (Boston, 1981), 2-4.

[52]James D. Anderson, "Education for Servitude: The Social Purposes of Schooling in the Black South, 1870-1930" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1973); Donald Spivey, Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915 (Westport, Conn., 1978).